



# **COPS** *Fact Sheet*

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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## *Value-Based Initiative*

"We may not always *agree* on everything, but at least in Fort Wayne we can *talk* about it."

Chief Rusty York,

Fort Wayne Police Department

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services funds a wide variety of projects designed to strengthen the relationships between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. COPS' Value-Based Initiative (VBI) funds projects that often partner law enforcement agencies with faith-based elements of their communities. COPS has invested more than \$4.2 million in VBI projects all over the country since 2000.

In order for officers and deputies to effectively engage citizens in the law enforcement process, each must trust the other and believe that all are working for the common good. Projects like COPS' Value-Based Initiative help build that trust and sense of teamwork, which significantly contributes to making American communities safer and more secure. VBI projects make communities healthier by connecting them through meaningful partnerships.

### ***COPS' Value-Based Initiative:***

The Value-Based Initiative provides the start-up resources to develop a strategy and create an infrastructure to implement it. A successful VBI program is designed from its inception to establish local capacity to sustain the initiative beyond federal funding. VBI sites should serve as model programs built on the principles of community policing that other communities can replicate.

### **Boston Police Department, Massachusetts**

In Boston, the focus is on the successful integration of ex-offenders back into the community. The VBI brings together four faith-based organizations to partner with the Boston Police Department, mentoring and monitoring high-risk ex-offenders as they return to their neighborhoods. The VBI creates an integrated support network across neighborhoods to assist this population in the reintegration process. Early outcomes are promising.

### **Chicago Police Department, Illinois**

An alliance between the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and the Chicago Police Department puts VBI funding to work through town-hall meetings and discussions. The VBI action plan includes implementation of a series of dialogues designed to get to the root causes of issues that divide minority communities.

One result of these discussions has been the production of a series of training videos for police that focus on how best to engage the public.

### **Fort Wayne Police Department, Indiana**

Joining forces with "Stop the Madness," a Fort Wayne youth development program, police utilize VBI funding to create an alliance to curb anti-social trends.

This pairing of community policing and juvenile delinquency experts promotes programs focusing on crisis intervention, mentoring activities, interview skills, job referral assistance, and open discussions from the youth perspective. A ministers' training academy also works with law enforcement to positively impact the community.

Fort Wayne also focuses on the challenge of re-entry, pairing mentors from the faith community with ex-offenders.

### **Fort Worth Police Department, Texas**

Charged with creating a VBI system that encourages the movement of target communities into the city's mainstream, the Fort Worth Police Department teamed with Ministers Against Crime to take on community problems and conduct regular classes through the Ministers Police Academy. This VBI includes a community training and resource center, a community recruiting campaign, volunteer training, and a citizen patrol program.

### **Redlands Police Department, California**

The Redlands VBI brings the faith community into the criminal justice system through the local "Cops and Clergy Network." This network facilitates the faith community's work with regional police agencies and has been so successful that its efforts have expanded beyond the immediate region.

The Redlands Police Department also focuses on joining the faith community with existing youth development programs through the local community collaborative, "Building a Generation." The VBI established a teen cyber café that provides Redlands youth with a safe place to enjoy positive social activities in the critical after-school hours. At the café, teens have access to high-end computer technology, homework assistance, and job training.

### **St. Paul Police Department, Minnesota**

The St. Paul Police Department will partner with area community and faith-based groups to design and deliver a police-faith leader training program. The VBI will also sponsor three Safe Haven Community Learning Centers to provide a supportive environment for area youth during critical after-school hours.

### **New Haven, Connecticut**

The New Haven Police Department partners with Empower New Haven to focus on a number of issues of importance to the community, particularly at-risk youth and youth violence. An organization called Strive New Haven, made-up of ex-offenders, will work with youth in areas that include job-readiness and life-skills training.

### **Riverside, California**

The Riverside Police Department, through its VBI program, created six "safe havens" for at-risk youth, located at six faith-based organizations throughout the city. Each site provides mentoring, life-skills training, tutoring, and parenting classes. The Riverside VBI will also host the area's third Faith and Justice Summit.

### **St. Bernard, Louisiana**

The St. Bernard Parish Sheriff's Office will expand its Citizens Police Academy and develop a Ministers Police Academy and a Students Police Academy. The goal is to both further the concepts of community policing and build a bridge between groups that have not always connected in a positive way.

### **San Bernardino, California**

The San Bernardino Police Department partners with numerous community groups and faith-based organization and places a particular emphasis on juvenile offenders and the homeless. A Juvenile Offenders Mentoring program is underway, as is a training program for Clergy on Crisis Intervention Skills. Regular Homeless Enriched Living programs will be conducted, as will regular Citizen Police Training Academies.

### **Richmond, Virginia**

The Richmond Police Chaplain Academies will be a joint effort between the Richmond Police Department and area faith groups. Graduates of the Academy will work with the community to reduce both crime and the fear of crime. Specifically, they will work with after-school programs to keep troubled youth off the street, provide mentoring for children without fathers in their lives, and provide counseling and referrals for families with special needs. The Academy graduates will also form an organization called "Clergy for Safe Neighborhoods."

### **Portland, Oregon**

The Portland Police Bureau intends to build a model of collaborative dialogue between police officers and members of the faith community that can be replicated in other areas. This will be accomplished through developing and conducting a Dialogue Circles program that will examine the issues dividing area residents and work toward resolving them.

### **Broward County, Florida**

The Broward County Sheriff's Office partners with area faith groups to mentor young women at risk. This program includes training in general life-skills, job skills, drug abuse prevention, and academic skills.

### **Washington, D.C.**

The Metropolitan Police Department will work with local faith partners to establish a Clergy Response Team that will respond to the scene of traumatic incidents and provide services to victims, witnesses, and their families.

### **Kansas City, Kansas**

The Kansas City Police Department is expanding its Kansas City Together initiative—designed to bridge barriers between the community and the police—by incorporating faith partners into the process. A specific focus will be the reduction of juvenile crime.

### ***Contact COPS***

For more information on COPS VBI please contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1.800.421.6770, or visit COPS Online at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).